

Week Ending Friday, December 21, 2001

The President's Radio Address

December 15, 2001

Good morning. As too many Americans know firsthand, the economy began to slow early last year, and terrorism has hit us hard. Many workers have lost jobs, and others are seeing their hours cut. The American people want action to improve our economy, and so do I.

More than 2 months, and more than 700,000 lost jobs ago, I proposed an economic security package to help workers who have been laid off and to take action to create jobs and promote long-term economic growth. The House of Representatives quickly responded, passing its own legislation to help jumpstart the economy. The Senate has failed to act. And while the Senate has failed to do its work, more and more Americans have been thrown out of work.

To break the logjam in the Senate, I reached out this week to moderate Democrats and Republicans to build a consensus that gave both parties some of what they want and, most important, will give our economy the boost it needs. This bipartisan package will give workers who have lost a job since the recession began last March an additional 13 weeks of unemployment benefits. It will also help unemployed workers keep their health insurance and will give Governors greater resources and more flexibility to assist those in need.

These new bipartisan measures help working families who are struggling to make ends meet, giving up to \$600 cash refund to low income families who don't earn enough to pay income tax but still pay part of their income in payroll taxes. And this plan helps middle class families, couples earning approximately \$60,000, and individuals earning \$40,000 by speeding up planned tax relief for them, as well.

This installment of tax relief was scheduled for 2004. Under this new idea, many middle

class families will see a rise in their take-home pay in just a couple of weeks.

And finally, this agreement will create jobs. Among other steps, it gives employers incentives to invest in new equipment right away. It lowers the tax rate for 10 million small businesses and entrepreneurs, making it easier for them to expand and grow and hire new workers. It focuses on other policies that will also increase investment and produce new jobs.

This economic growth package is urgently needed. Today the Federal Government's Council of Economic Advisers released a report that estimates the bipartisan agreement reached this week can save 300,000 American jobs that might otherwise be lost if we fail to act.

Democrats and Republicans set aside partisan politics to arrive at this agreement. They want to get something done for America's workers. We believe this agreement has enough votes to be approved by the United States Senate, and I'm ready to sign it into law. But first the Senate leader must schedule a vote.

On behalf of the American workers and our American economy, I call on the leadership of the Senate to bring this bipartisan economic recovery plan to a vote, to bring help to unemployed workers and a crucial boost to our economy.

The holidays are upon us, and time is running out. While some in Washington are looking for reasons not to act, many in Congress in both parties want to find a way to get the job done. America's workers are counting on us.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 2:55 p.m. on December 14 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on December 15. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 14 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast.

The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of the address.

Memorandum on Suspension of Limitations Under the Jerusalem Embassy Act

December 14, 2001

Presidential Determination No. 2002–05

Memorandum for the Secretary of State

Subject: Suspension of Limitations Under the Jerusalem Embassy Act

Pursuant to the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, including section 7(a) of the Jerusalem Embassy Act of 1995 (Public Law 104–45) (the “Act”), I hereby determine that it is necessary to protect the national security interests of the United States to suspend for a period of 6 months the limitations set forth in sections 3(b) and 7(b) of the Act. My Administration remains committed to beginning the process of moving our embassy to Jerusalem.

You are hereby authorized and directed to transmit this determination to the Congress, accompanied by a report in accordance with section 7(a) of the Act, and to publish the determination in the *Federal Register*.

This suspension shall take effect after transmission of this determination and report to the Congress.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., December 21, 2001]

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 17, and it will be published in the *Federal Register* on December 27.

Remarks in Honor of Eid al-Fitr and an Exchange With Reporters

December 17, 2001

The President. Welcome. It’s good to see everybody. Thank you all for coming. We want to thank you for coming to the White House to celebrate Eid. It’s so nice of you to be here. It reminds us how much we all

have in common, how similar boys and girls are, no matter what their religion may be. So thanks for being here today. We’re really thrilled you’re here.

Eid is a time of joy, after a season of fasting and prayer and reflection. Each year, the end of Ramadan means celebration and thanksgiving for millions of Americans. And your joy during this season enriches the life of our great country. This year, Eid is celebrated at the same time as Hanukkah and Advent. So it’s a good time for people of these great faiths, Islam, Judaism, and Christianity, to remember how much we have in common: devotion to family, a commitment to care for those in need, a belief in God and His justice, and the hope for peace on earth.

We also share a custom I know all of you are excited about, and that’s giving gifts to children. And after this is over, I have a little gift for you from the White House. This season is meant to be a time of rejoicing as well as a time of generosity. I’m proud that our country, during Eid, is helping the people of Afghanistan. And I’m proud that the children of America, through America’s Fund for Afghan Children, are giving food and clothes and toys to the children of Afghanistan.

The people of Afghanistan have suffered so much, and we’re committed to helping them in their time of hardship and in their time of need. These are challenging days for our Nation, but holidays like this one remind us about how much we have to be thankful for and that God delights in joy and generosity of men and women and children. People of every faith are welcome here in the people’s house. People of every background are welcome to come here to the White House.

I want to thank you all for coming, and I’d like to go read—if you don’t mind, read from a book to you. Is that okay? How about that? Let’s go do that, and then we’ll go back over here. We’ve got a special gift for you.

[At this point, the President read a poem entitled, “Good Deeds.”]

The President. Thank you all for coming. We’re getting ready to leave. I may answer a few questions if you have some. Stretch, [Richard Keil, Bloomberg News] and then Ron [Ron Fournier, Associated Press].